

Future Study Area No. 17 – Darst Street and Jerome Street

PUBLIC FORUM

Wednesday, August 5, 2015

7 p.m.

Marilla Center

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

- Not including project staff and a *Dominion Post* representative, there were eighteen (18) attendees with fifteen (15) attendees providing their names and contact information.
- Chris Fletcher, AICP, Director of Development Services welcomed attendees; described the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Update process and its Appendix A relating to “Areas for Future Study”; described the Small Area Plan Guidelines adopted by the Morgantown Planning Commission; introduced Chet Parsons, AICP, AECOM.
- Chet Parsons presented the preliminary results of “Phase One – Inventory and Analysis” for Study Area No. 17, which included the following PowerPoint slides:
 - Why prepare a small area plan?
 - Existing conditions
 - Demographic data and maps illustrating zoning districts, affected properties, housing units by 2010 Census Block, population by 2010 Census Block, and topography.
- Attendees shared the following information and observations:
 - Older parcels on Des Moines Avenue were originally one (1) acre lots.
 - Need to construct streets shown in the paper rights-of-ways to improve access to larger properties within the study area.
 - Need to construct patio-type homes.
 - The study area and immediate neighborhood is centrally located and close to everything (shopping, schools, hospitals, interstate, etc.).
 - Need to improve and expand infrastructure.
 - Volume and speed of traffic on Hampton Avenue and Darst Street is a serious concern.
 - Need to fix roads and widen them, even just the shoulders.
 - State should have finished State Route 705 and connected it to Hartman Run Road over the hill.
 - Need more clout with State like Fairmont has.
 - Cannot talk about increase residential density before talking about improvements to infrastructure.
 - Serious concern with steep slopes and stormwater runoff if some of the larger vacant parcels are developed.

- There is a well on a Milton Avenue property that is not currently used but a concern was expressed that the well may be impacted by new development.
- Most attendees did not oppose increasing single-family residential density from R-1 to R-1A, although a couple stated they liked the larger lots of R-1.
- There may be a slight interest in two-family and/or townhouse residential development, but more information would be needed.
- Attendees did not want to see multi-family residential development within the study area nor did they want to see mixed-use or commercial development.
- Need to widen Hampton Avenue to accommodate existing traffic.
- New driveways to serve increased development should not connect directly to Hampton Avenue or Darst Street based on a concern with safety.
- Hampton Avenue was originally improved to accommodate access for Fire Department.
- Development costs in Morgantown are too high, which increases density.
- Owners of properties within the immediate area should not bear the costs of infrastructure improvements.
- There is a creek along Jerome Street that residents have highlighted as a hindrance to additional development in the area. It will need particular attention when developing alternatives.
- A concern was expressed that although the meeting was well-publicized, it was discouraging that more people were not involved in this planning process. It was requested that additional letters be sent out to a wider group of residents for the next meeting.
- Attendees requested the following information for the next forum:
 - Who are the owners of the properties within the study area?
 - What infrastructure improvements are planned?
 - A comparative chart or table illustrating the difference between the R-1 and R-1A Districts.
 - Would like to see photos of the study area.
 - Would like to see R-1 and R-1A development scenarios (two- and three-dimensional).

Fletcher noted that invitation letters were sent to approximately 90 property owners representing the owners within the study area and within approximately 500 feet of the study area boundary. Information was shared through Jerome Park Neighborhood Association leadership to its membership email list. A press release was issued and the City's Communications Managers pushed the forum's information out through various multi- and social media outlets. The Development Services Department will identify additional avenues to publicize the planning project and the next forum.

Fletcher showed attendees the website created to serve as a one-stop-shop repository for all information pertaining to the Areas for Future Study.

C. Fletcher and C. Parsons noted requested information would be assembled and organized to facilitate the discussion at the next forum, which would be scheduled in the next 30 to 60 days.

The forum concluded at approximately 8:10 p.m.